

Safe Lifting/ Back Safety Training

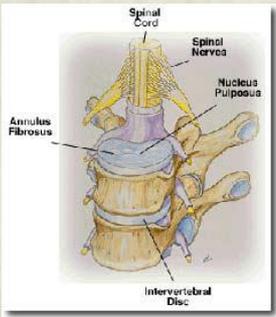
Environmental Health and Safety



Why Back Safety is Important

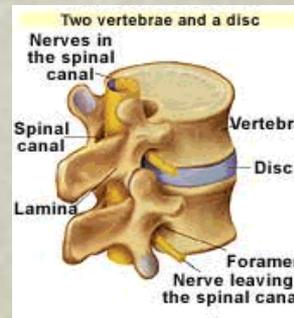
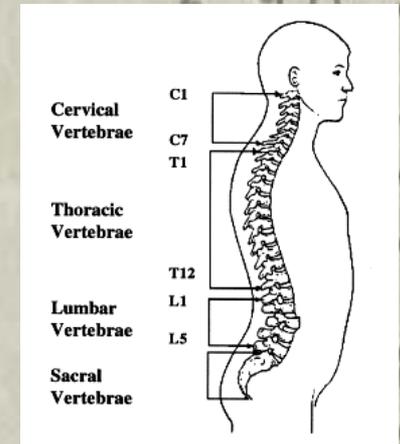
- ❖ Back injuries are considered by OSHA the nation's #1 workplace safety problem
- ❖ Back injuries are often:
 - Very painful
 - A long term or lifetime disability
 - Expensive to diagnose and treat





Get to Know Your Back

- ❖ Your back is composed of vertebrae, discs, nerves, and muscles
- ❖ The spine's basic functions include
 - Providing support
 - Protecting the spinal cord
 - Providing flexibility to allow bending and rotating



Get to Know Your Back

- ❖ Your spinal cord is the main information highway for your entire body
- ❖ Because your spine is a delicate structure, you will experience pain whenever you strain, sprain, or in some way injure your back.

BEND YOUR KNEES



Causes of Back Pain

- ❖ Poor Posture
- ❖ Poor Physical Condition-out of shape
- ❖ Tension and Stress
- ❖ Aging and Disease
- ❖ Impact Trauma
- ❖ Repetitive Trauma
- ❖ Incorrect Lifting



Lifting Safely



- ❖ Assess the situation- Before lifting and carrying a heavy object, take a few moments to assess the situation.
 - How far will you have to carry the load?
 - Is the way clear of clutter, cords, slippery areas, overhangs, stairs, curbs, or uneven surfaces?
 - Will there be doors that are closed? Ask someone to hold a door open or place a wedge under the door to hold it open.
 - Once you get the load up, will you be able to see over the load, or will the load block your view?
 - Can the load be disassembled, carried in pieces, then reassembled?

Before You Lift

- ❖ Size up the load- test the weight by lifting a corner of the object. If it is too heavy or an odd shape- **STOP!!!**

- Ask for help
- Use a mechanical lift device
- Consider using gloves that will improve your grip and protect your hands.
- Never lift anything unless you are sure you can do so safely.



Lifting the Load

- ❖ The **KEY** to lifting safely is keeping your back straight or slightly arched. **NEVER USE YOUR BACK TO LIFT!**



Lifting the Load



- ❖ Start the lift by putting your feet close to the object. Get a firm footing.
- ❖ Center your body over your feet.
- ❖ Squat down like a professional weightlifter, bending your knees. Keep your back straight or slightly arched. You want your legs to do the lifting, not your back.
- ❖ Grasp the load securely with your hands, and pull the load close to you.
- ❖ Smoothly lift straight up. **NEVER TWIST YOUR BODY WHILE LIFTING, KEEPING YOUR HEAD UP, AS IF LOOKING STRAIGHT AHEAD, NOT DOWN.**

Carrying the Load

- ❖ As you carry the load
 - Keep your back straight or slightly arched.
 - Walk slowly and surely.
 - Use your feet to change directions. Never twist your back.
 - Avoid leaning over.
 - Avoid lifting a load over your head.
 - If you become tired, set the load down, and rest for a few moments.



Setting the Load Down



- ❖ Opposite of lifting the load
 - Position yourself where you want to set the load.
 - Squat down. Let your legs do the work, not your back.
 - REMEMBER NOT TO TWIST YOUR BODY WHILE SETTING DOWN A LOAD, AND KEEP YOUR HEAD UP.
 - Once the load is where you want it, release your grip. Never release your grip on a load until it is secure. You don't want to drop a load on your foot. Or, if someone is helping you, dropping a load unexpectedly can injure the other person.

Alternatives to Lifting

❖ Handtrucks and Pushcarts

- Remember, it is easier to push than pull
- Stay close to the load, try not to lean over, and keep your back straight or slightly arched.
- Use both hands to control the handtruck or pushcart.
- Use tie-down straps, if necessary, to secure the load.
- Avoid stairs and inclines. If you must take a load to another floor, use a freight elevator.
- Never "horse around" with handtrucks and pushcarts



Alternatives to Lifting

❖ Forktrucks

- If an object is too heavy to lift or carry with a handtruck or load onto a pushcart, use a forklift.
- **WARNING:** Never attempt to operate a forklift or other piece of lifting equipment unless you have been trained and authorized to do so.



Maintaining a Healthy Back

❖ Posture

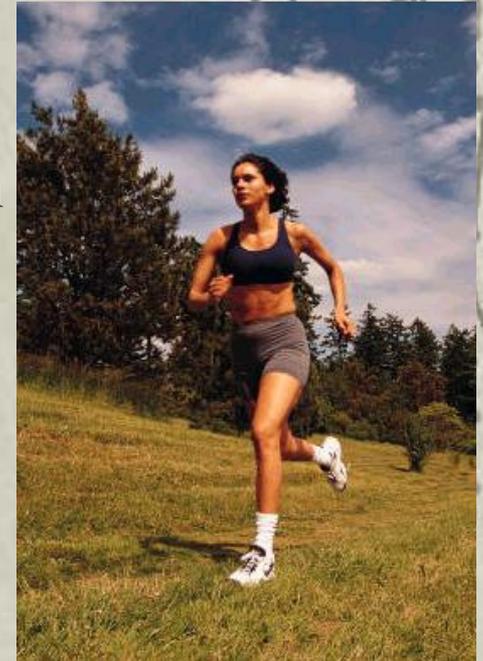
- Standing- don't slouch, use a footrest or rubber mat if standing for a long time, select appropriate and comfortable footwear
- Sitting- don't slouch, lower back support, proper chair selection
- Lying down- select a mattress that doesn't sag



Maintaining a Healthy Back

❖ Exercise

- Go for a walk, bike ride, swim, jog, or another sport-
ALWAYS maintain good posture throughout your exercise session
- If you have a history of back trouble, check with your doctor before you begin any strenuous exercise



Maintaining a Healthy Back

❖ Eat Healthy

- Stay at a healthy weight. Being overweight puts extra strain on your back. Select foods that are good for you and help you to keep your weight down



REMEMBER

*Your back is one of your
greatest assets,
TAKE CARE OF IT!*

